10 Evangelical theology and culture

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Though the evangelical movement has become a diverse, worldwide movement, there has been consistency in attitudes toward culture. Throughout their history evangelicals have displayed ambivalence toward their cultural context. The world was either something to be won over in the name of Christ, or to be avoided as a source of temptation, but it could also represent a resource to be exploited in pursuit of their evangelical calling. As a result, their relationship with culture has been ambiguous, marked more often by vigorous campaigns against particular evils believed to threaten Christian living – whether liquor, polygamy or slavery, or, more recently, abortion and gay marriage – than by thoughtful engagement with the complexities of culture. In this respect views of culture reflect the unique historical and theological character of the movement, with its roots in the Reformation, and the revival and missionary movements emanating from Europe and North America.[1] In this article we will use "culture" to refer to artifacts, practices, and institutions by which a people expresses its identity; in theological terms, what humans make of God's good creation.

HISTORICAL SOURCES: REFORMATION AND REVIVALS

Two historical sources in particular have shaped evangelical views of culture: the Reformation and the major revivals. The watchwords of the Reformation – faith alone, the Bible alone, and Christ alone – became central to evangelical theology. But the roots of ambiguity toward culture lay, in part, in the diversity of the views of the major Reformers. John Calvin believed that true worship of God should lead to transformation of cultural structures; Martin Luther taught that the word of God would do its work in the human heart and life, and involvement in political or cultural

processes was a matter of relative indifference; Anabaptists felt that radical discipleship involved a more complete break with secular power structures. Each of these attitudes would have influence on evangelical views of culture. But there was one common element that became decisive in all subsequent evangelical theologies of culture: the iconoclastic temperament of the Reformation. Despite their varying emphases, all Reformers rejected the medieval view that particular places and objects conveyed spiritual reality, and, in particular, they denied that these symbolic entities might orient and illuminate social and political life. For the Reformers only the response of personal and informed faith was capable of constituting the people of God. The unintended consequence of this inward turn was, eventually, to cut the theological ground from under any public or social understanding of Christian truth. Little by little what had been widely understood to be the two books of God, revelation in Scripture and in nature, was reduced to God's voice in Scripture alone. And it was in the evangelical movement in particular where this reduction became most evident. In America this led many to believe that the Bible in the hands of the common Christian was a sufficient theological education for anyone. Ironically the very Reformation movements of personal faith and voluntary association most responsible for influencing modern ideas of democracy, tended by their very nature to impede the development of theological perspectives that could support or critique these notions.

The second source for evangelical attitudes toward culture was the revivals of the Anglo-Saxon world, and the missionary movements these influenced. Continuing the emphases of the Reformation, evangelicals have come to believe that God works mostly by way of periodic and intermittent interventions in the lives of individuals and communities. Thus general and broad-based efforts of reform and influence, most evangelicals believe, will be ineffectual apart from the direct working of God in the individual and the larger society. This has led not only to viewing revivals, or personal conversion, as the means to social renewal, but also, curiously, to viewing the pursuit of social causes in revivalist terms – organized by local chapters and culminating in large stadium rallies. While the activism inherent in the promotion of revivals has proved an important engine for social reform, it has also hampered the development of theological resources by which to evaluate these events. As Mark Noll argues, "The very character of the revival that made evangelical religion into a potent force in North America weakened its intellectual power."[2]

NINETEENTH-CENTURY MOVEMENTS: COMMON SENSE REALISM AND ROMANTICISM

In both Britain and America during the early nineteenth century, evangelicalism played an important social and political role; in America it became the dominant religious force. Consistent with the influences that we have traced, there was a widespread assumption that the American form of democracy was essentially Christian. Moreover, the free liberal economy that was developing, dependent as it was on the free choice of the individual, was also felt to be essentially Christian. These views were not so much argued as assumed, and were felt to be so expressive of the gospel that missionaries did not hesitate to make them part of their instruction on the mission field. Their focus on voluntarism and freedom of choice had a large impact on culture in many parts of the world. In part these views flourished because of the support they received from the intellectual system known as common sense realism, which evangelicals came to espouse during the first half of the nineteenth century. Based on the empiricism of Francis Bacon and philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment, this view assumed that God had so arranged the world that the human mind could know and order it, and indeed come to correct knowledge of the world and God. A famous instance of this thinking is evident in the opening pages of Charles Hodge's influential *Systematic Theology*, written in the middle of the century. There the most influential American theologian argued that as nature contains facts that the scientist arranges, "so the Bible contains the truths which the theologian has to collect, authenticate, arrange, and exhibit in their internal relation to each other."[3] These attitudes reinforced an American pragmatic temperament and helped to fuel the industrial advances of the century, but they did little to encourage a systematic reflection on societal problems.

An even more important influence on American evangelical confidence in the spread of democracy and the free market was theological: evangelicals believed that God had a special role for America to play in bringing about the kingdom. These ideas were related to the eschatological view called postmillennialism, which holds that the kingdom of God is already present in history and is extended through the preaching of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit. At the end of this age, Christ would return to judge the world and set up his millennial reign. The Reformers believed that the Fall of Babylon had begun with the Reformation, and this view was elaborated during the Puritan Revolution in England. But it was

in New England especially where Christians saw themselves setting up a godly commonwealth. Jonathan Edwards believed that through the revivals God was establishing an earthly kingdom. These views were influential among evangelicals into the nineteenth century – at least until these hopes were dashed during the Civil War and the urban and industrial unrest that followed. Charles Finney sought to Christianize the nation both through his revivals and the social reform they stimulated. In England similar motivations were behind the reforms of William Wilberforce and his friends.

Romanticism with its emphasis on feeling and individual expression arose in Europe as a reaction against the rationalism of the Enlightenment. This movement, with its roots in earlier Pietist movements and the inward turn of the Reformation, was to be particularly influential on evangelicalism. Friedrich Schleiermacher's view of faith as an expression of the feeling of dependence on God – deriving in part from his own Moravian background – was an important example of thinkers who sought a deeper faith that was not confined by the strictures of reason. Evangelicals, while resisting some implications of this emphasis, were drawn to the inward and personal emphases of this religion of feeling. In Britain and America this religion of the heart was largely mediated by the deeper life conferences at the end of the century. The last half of the nineteenth century saw proliferation of perfectionist and deeper life movements that picked up on the emphases of Romanticism and responded to the cultural traumas of that period. By 1875 these formed into a regular series of Keswick conferences, first in England then America. These conferences, and the books and literature they stimulated, encouraged Christians to move from a carnal life to a higher state of consecration by a complete yielding of self to the Holy Spirit. The influence of this movement on social and cultural involvement was ambiguous. On the one hand, at least until the 1890s, the filling of the Holy Spirit was considered "power for service" which led to various programs of social involvement. On the other hand the inward, feeling-based emphases of the movement tended to discourage vigorous involvement in the social arena, especially as more liberal Christians began to champion social causes later in the century.[4]

Attitudes shaped by the revivals and Romanticism came to influence, among other things, evangelical attitudes toward the arts.[5] A dominant and enduring characteristic of American evangelicalism, resulting from both revivalism and Romanticism, has been a focus on immediate experience and conversion. These and other streams converged to discourage any emphasis on discipline and developmentalism. Revivalism stressed a

"fresh start"; spirituality growing out of Romanticism stressed "let go and let God." Both of these led to a focus on the ravished individual as agent of change and a locus of creativity. Roger Lundin points out that this complex of ideas led evangelicals to view artists as liberated individuals who create new worlds, like God himself.[6] Ironically these views corresponded almost exactly to secular views of art that would triumph in the twentieth century, though absent a superintending God or a sense of sin.

FUNDAMENTALISM, PREMILLENNIALISM, AND THE GREAT REVERSAL

The revivals of the early nineteenth century stimulated many evangelicals to become involved in social causes. Their efforts against slavery, child labor, and other injustices left a lasting mark on American culture. Later in the century the question of the Christian's relation to culture was contested, and in the first quarter of the twentieth century social and cultural concerns disappeared almost entirely from evangelical consideration. In a few generations evangelical Christians in America went from being a dominant (and constructive) force, both in religion and politics, to being an often despised and culturally invisible minority. There were important historical reasons for this. Believing Christians were placed on the defensive by the challenges presented by Darwin, industrial unrest, immigration and the progressive social gospel this stimulated, and, especially, by the challenge to the authority of Scripture represented by the rise of higher criticism. But arguably the major reasons for the fundamentalist withdrawal from cultural engagement during this period were theological.

The early Puritans brought with them a keen sense of God's interest in the larger culture and the importance of just structures and laws. This Reformed heritage clearly played a role in the revolutionary movements of the eighteenth century. It also played a role in the revivals and reforms of the early nineteenth century, at least among the heirs of this tradition more open to the working of the Holy Spirit. But the spiritual movements later in the century, while not without Reformed influence, tended to focus on individual spirituality and personal efforts to submit to God. All of this encouraged what might be called a lay-level, and unreflective, Arminianism. Since Edwards, revivalism had gradually moved from an emphasis on the working of God, to a focus on human response that came to assume the "free and decisive character of the human free will."[7] The Keswick tradition went even further in this direction by adding an

emotional dimension to this free decision of faith. The call to personal spirituality eclipsed any wider responsibility to public life, beyond evangelization, though it did stimulate the development of a rich hymnody and other forms of popular religious art.

A further theological motive for a retreat from culture was the rise of premillennial eschatology, especially in the context of dispensational theology. The predominant view of the end times was postmillennial well into the nineteenth century – reflecting the belief that the world would gradually improve before Christ returned. Later in the century John Nelson Darby and English Plymouth Brethren brought his dispensational system of biblical interpretation to America, where it was warmly embraced by leaders of the Bible conference movement and popularized by C. I. Scofield's annotated 1909 edition of the King James Bible. This view divided history into particular periods according to differing ways God deals with the human race. On this view the present period of Grace would culminate in the premillennial rapture of the saints, preceding a time of troubles known as the tribulation, followed by a thousand-year earthly reign of Christ.

The comfort provided by the "blessed hope" of the rapture of the saints proved attractive to Christians increasingly discouraged by the religious and social events around them. The neat structures of dispensationalist views of history and the belief that the rapture would be preceded by a worsening of the world situation and, especially, by a falling away from the truth by Christians, helped to explain many of the disturbing things they saw around them. While providing comfort and explanation, these views did little to encourage any constructive involvement in the larger culture.

But while they disdained involvement in the larger culture, evangelicals, or fundamentalists as they were called, turned their energies to creating a significant subculture of institutions, which prepared the way for a mid-century revival.[8] Beginning in the 1920s, fundamentalists began to form an impressive array of cultural institutions. Since many of the colleges founded by evangelicals in the nineteenth century had lost their spiritual orientation, many new Bible colleges were founded, which later in the century developed into liberal arts colleges. A variety of publications were set up and new initiatives were taken in missions and evangelism – many making use of the latest technology. To counter secularizing trends in public behavior, fundamentalist institutions began to institute codes of conduct during the 1930s, something that the largely Christian cultural consensus had previously made unnecessary.

By the 1940s fundamentalism had developed into a large and diverse movement with its own institutions and international connections. Theologically, however, the attitudes toward culture formed by dispensationalism and premillennialism prevailed. In general Christians looked around them and saw a largely secular culture, and apart from making various evangelistic forays, they followed the biblical admonition to come out from among them and be separate. A comparison with the first half of the nineteenth century is instructive. Earlier, during the Second Great Awakening, evangelicals in Britain and America were busy forming organizations to address a wide variety of social ills. There was hardly any vice one could think of that did not have a corresponding group seeking its extinction. A century later, evangelical efforts were addressed in quite different directions. Beginning in the 1940s, evangelicals were busy founding an equally impressive range of institutions. But rather than addressing its social needs, fundamentalists addressed the world as an object of mission and evangelism.[9] There were new national evangelistic enterprises – Billy Graham, Young Life, Youth for Christ, Boys' Brigade, and any number of mission organizations. Compassion-based ministries would come later, but during this period only World Vision represented any larger social sense of evangelical responsibility. There was a positive side to these efforts; indeed they would together stimulate a renewal of American Christianity. Many of these ministries made creative use of modern technology and cultural forms in the service of their mission. All of this would eventually have an important cultural impact, but at this early stage any larger cultural impact was missing. In 1947, theologian Carl Henry underlined both the weakness of this tradition, and its potential. In his book *Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* he calls fundamentalists to task for their withdrawal from the public arena and challenges them to take their larger responsibilities more seriously.

FRANCIS SCHAEFFER, LAUSANNE, AND THE RECOVERY OF A CULTURAL VISION

By mid-century evangelicals were once again emerging as a visible presence in American life, but their influence on culture was minimal. The postwar revival did not, immediately, produce political or social reformers. After withdrawing from culture, evangelicals should not have been surprised to look around and see Christian values absent from their schools, movies, and art museums. By this time the increasing secularism in Europe coupled with the cultural retreat represented by fundamentalism had resulted in a

situation in which the deep structures of modern thought and culture had been formed by thinkers radically opposed to Christianity – Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud.[10] Little wonder that Christians avoided involvement in the resulting secular culture, sending their children to Christian colleges and their money to missions.

But things were about to change – the renewal of evangelicalism and a longstanding Christian presence in the American South would gradually make its presence felt. The 1960s represent a transformational era not only for American culture generally, but for evangelicalism in particular. When Martin Luther King articulated his call for justice and equal rights at the very center of American public life, his speeches were filled with themes that would have been familiar to evangelical Christians. In that decade Christians from the South, both black and white, schooled in evangelical values, fueled America's struggle over civil rights, even if many northern evangelicals still avoided direct involvement.[11]

The person who did much to awaken evangelicals to reflection on culture was Francis Schaeffer, whose Swiss-based ministry involved a creative ministry to modern intellectuals. Through his lecture tours in America and Britain, and later through his books and videos, Schaeffer influenced evangelicals to think through, often for the first time, their relationship to culture. In a way that recalls Pope John XXIII's intent at the Second Vatican Council to open up the windows of the church to the modern world, Schaeffer brought contemporary philosophical and literary issues into the center of evangelical conversation. For many he provided a window, even a doorway out, into the larger culture. His early books, *Escape from Reason* (1968) and *The God who is There* (1968), became immediate bestsellers. In the latter he describes his program of bearing witness to historic Christianity into the twentieth century. While many of his historical and philosophical claims may be disputed, his purpose of thinking holistically about philosophy, the arts, and culture, in a recovery of a Reformed vision of reality, was striking. His reflections on culture were given credibility by his friendship with Dutch art historian H. R. Rookmaaker, who applied a Reformed analysis of culture to modern art. Schaeffer declared a turning point had been crossed sometime toward the end of the nineteenth century, when existential experience claimed precedence over rational thought, and any final meaning to human life. Only the historic truth of God's reality and Christ's work of salvation, Schaeffer argued, shows "the truth of the external world and truth of what man himself is."[12]

Schaeffer's influence was widespread both in Britain and America. For many at the time the strong critique of modern culture was less significant

than the fact that culture was being surveyed and taken seriously at all. Many who ventured out of the evangelical subculture to look more closely where Schaeffer was pointing did not agree with his wholly negative views about culture, but his stimulus was critical.

Evangelicals' continuing commitment to missions and evangelism led to an event that was to shape profoundly their attitudes toward culture: the Lausanne Congress on Evangelism, called by Billy Graham in July 1974.[13] Though growing out of evangelicalism's central commitment to evangelism, the conference heralded an important advance in reflection on culture. For one thing it was broadly evangelical and included Christians from around the world. The leadership of John Stott and Jack Dain was significant in including British (and Australian) evangelicals in the conversation. While there had been much exchange between Britain and America, as we have noted, American evangelicalism up to this point was often insular in its thinking. John Stott opened American Christians to a new and broader interpretation of Christianity (as earlier his fellow countryman C. S. Lewis had done). He and other British evangelicals represented an Anglican Christianity that had not been influenced by the fundamentalism that had troubled American Christianity. Though committed to strong Christian witness and orthodox faith, these represented a version of Christianity and evangelism rooted and trained in England's major universities, rather than in Bible schools as in America. Stott's leadership was particularly important in preparing the Lausanne Covenant, which resulted from the consultation. In addition to sections on Christian social responsibility and on education, the statement included a section on "Evangelism in Culture," which said in part: "Because man is God's creature, some of his culture is rich in beauty and goodness ... The Gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluated all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness."[14]

Prominent voices at the congress included Latin, African, and Asian theologians, and reports were heard about ministry in all sectors of society and from all parts of the globe. The exposure to the multicultural reality of missions was to have a lasting influence on evangelicalism's self-identity. This decade marks the point at which evangelicals began to recognize their kinship and mutual accountability with Christians from around the world. Interestingly, this included an awakening to their affinity with the movement of the Spirit represented by Pentecostalism. Though its American origins dated back to 1907, Pentecostals had not considered themselves a part of the evangelical movement until well after World War II. In the

1970s this changed when a charismatic awakening took place in many Protestant denominations (and even in many Catholic parishes). These groups immediately recognized their "evangelical" character and often joined with traditional evangelicals in evangelistic and social outreach. Pentecostals had early been involved in international missions, and their presence at Lausanne underlined the spiritual and cultural diversity of evangelicalism. Pentecostalism itself had roots in Black as well as Anglo culture, and so in many ways marked a unique multicultural form of Christianity – a fact that may account for its popularity in Africa and Latin America. Theologically, Pentecostalism's emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit sparked new reflection (and sometimes controversy) with respect to the Third Person of the Trinity, though, interestingly, it did not lead evangelicals to reflect on the work of the Spirit in the broader culture.

The growing multicultural identity of evangelicalism is arguably the most significant development in evangelicalism's recent history, even if this is not widely recognized. Lausanne was followed by a consultation on Gospel and Culture in Willowbank, Bermuda, in January 1978.[15] There participants recognized that culture includes issues of tribalism, polygamy, and caste unfamiliar to Western Christians. The final report dealt not only with issues of conversion but also with communication and cultural change. The conversation this encouraged, which focused on what was called contextualization or inculturation of the gospel in culture, has proven important not only for missions and missionaries but also for all who are seeking to be faithful disciples in a changing world. While this discussion is only gradually being integrated into evangelical's reflection on culture, it offers the prospect of enlarging that conversation by raising issues of justice, poverty, development, and inter-religious dialogue.

CONTEMPORARY EVANGELICALISM AND CULTURE

Contemporary evangelicalism represents what might be called a divided personality. On the one hand a growing and sophisticated conversation about culture has taken root among evangelicals, especially among those who see themselves as part of a larger Christian community. At the same time continued parochialism marks the efforts of many evangelicals in America. We noted earlier the resources for theological reflection that are part of the evangelical heritage. Early in the last century J. Gresham Machen, articulating a strong Reformation theme, called Christians to transform

their culture by the word of God and more recently John Stott followed up Carl Henry's call for Christian reflection and involvement in culture.[16]

During the 1970s and 1980s, in a move expressive of the broadening of the evangelical identity we noted above, there was an important revival of a longstanding conversation between Anabaptist and Reformed theologians regarding Christian attitudes toward culture. In 1972 John Howard Yoder, in his book *The Politics of Jesus*, eloquently described his Mennonite view that Christians are called not to redeem and reform secular culture but to form an alternative culture as disciples of Jesus in community. Reformed voices in the tradition of Abraham Kuyper and J. Gresham Machen, Richard Mouw and Nicholas Wolterstorff responded that the Christian's responsibility extended beyond the walls of the church, laying out a larger view of the Christian mission.[17] These thinkers drew inspiration from Kuyper's notion of "common grace," which held that in addition to God's special saving grace evident in the work of Christ, there is a general sense that God is at work in the larger culture to draw people toward faith. Through books, conferences, and periodical exchange this proved to be a fruitful conversation that offered constructive proposals for both church renewal and cultural engagement. Encouraged by thinkers such as these, recently evangelicals have undertaken to reflect seriously on various aspects of culture. The influence of Yoder continues among younger evangelicals who are discouraged by unreflective activism, and who prefer to follow the call of Yoder, and more recently of Stanley Hauerwas, to seek cultural renewal by being the church. Others more positively want to see Christian presence and thinking more visible in the arts, including the popular media. Here, however, the activism of evangelicalism still rules, as the practice of these arts has outstripped serious theological reflection thereon.[18]

In spite of these encouraging signs, large segments of evangelicalism remain untouched by these conversations. The continuing failure to integrate expanding multicultural experience into a consistent understanding of culture and cultural engagement still bedevils the evangelical movement. This has become increasingly evident with the growing political (and social) visibility of evangelicalism over the last generation. What Mark Noll describes as the activist, biblicist, and populist character of evangelicalism continues to hamper systematic reflection on culture.[19] While these same characteristics could fund a more constructive approach to culture, too often, rather than a nuanced call to engagement, more popular evangelical voices lament the loss of Christian values and simplistically urge Christians to take back culture. Bob Briner, for example,

describes his cultural project in these terms: "It is about retaking lost territory, about winning, about conquest."[20] Similarly, Pat Robertson calls evangelicals to take back culture. In terms that recall the older postmillennialism he notes that God has shed his grace on America, but now the nation is at risk. "Either we decide to serve God and obey his commandments and ... reassert our historical values and beliefs, or we can witness the immanent collapse of our culture."[21] These more popular voices tend to frame their discussion by casting culture in a negative light, as needing rescue rather than sensitive and discerning involvement. Culture is something to be "taken back," and involvement something like a revival campaign.

When one considers the major contemporary influences on evangelicalism and culture, two names come to mind which illustrate the current ambiguity. On the one hand, C. S. Lewis continues to be one of the most important influences in broadening the evangelical culture. Both his thoughtful defense of Christianity and his fictional work have proven immensely stimulating to many evangelicals. But, oddly, when Lewis himself searches for reasons that Christians should value culture he comes up empty, concluding "on the whole, the New Testament seemed, if not hostile, yet unmistakably cold to culture ... I cannot see that we are encouraged to think it important."[22] The other continuing influence is surely Francis Schaeffer, who is experiencing a renewed popularity, although ironically Schaeffer's influence has migrated from being an avant-garde voice for cultural awareness and Christian engagement in the 1960s, to a conservative defender of now-lost Christian values today.[23] Meanwhile, his teachings on co-belligerency, Christian love, and responsibility for the environment have been overlooked.

In surveying evangelical involvement in culture, various theological themes – or, better, theological practices – have emerged that have often encouraged, and sometimes impeded, constructive engagement with culture. We conclude with a brief discussion of four of these. First, the biblical orientation of evangelicals has proven both an asset and a liability. On the one hand, Scripture has provided a language and framework in terms of which believers can address the issues of the day. Small group Bible studies and home groups have become not only an evangelistic strategy but also a kind of evangelical civic culture. Families, neighborhoods, and church congregations are often revitalized by these intimate groups and the study they encourage. At the same time dependence on Scripture has sometimes led to proof-texting and an unrealistic expectation that complex contemporary cultural issues can be resolved by the study of Scripture alone.

Secondly, the evangelical call for personal faith and conversion has had important cultural influence. This individualist emphasis has sometimes discouraged larger cooperative efforts of cultural renewal – partly because they are impersonal but also because, to evangelicals, they entail compromise of their biblical standards. But the need for personal response has also stimulated a lively and creative volunteerism, by which Christians band together to address social and spiritual issues. The emphasis on personal faith in Christ has also led to a rich tradition of hymnody and gospel singing that has characterized the evangelical movement since the Reformation.

Thirdly, we have noted a strong sense of God's sovereign direction of history and, especially, the sense that God is interested in cultural and political events. The wildly popular "Left Behind" series of novels, which focus on end-time events, whatever their literary value, reflect the lively evangelical sense that God is working in human history and that world events relate in important ways to this providence. Ironically, this sense of history and its ending has both encouraged social and cultural renewal, as during the Second Great Awakening, and discouraged it, as during the period of fundamentalism. But both cases reflect the mysterious relevance of God's purposes for human culture and for faithful discipleship.

Finally, because of their robust sense of God's working in history, evangelicals have consistently displayed a strong commitment to mission. Their personal faith, based on biblical teaching, has led them to commit vast resources and personnel for reaching out to the world in the name of Christ, first in evangelism but increasingly in social and cultural activities as well – from the Salvation Army to World Vision and the Lausanne Movement. This sense of mission has led them to appropriate, especially, popular culture and the latest technology to assure the relevance and efficacy of their mission.

Evangelical attitudes toward culture, at least in America, continue to respond to the deep-seated desire to convert sinners, or more recently, society, according to what evangelicals believe to be biblical principles. This calling represents their strength and their weakness. Evangelicals care deeply about the state of culture: they seek its redemption. But overall evangelicals address culture; they do not listen to it. While these efforts are often admirable and well-intentioned, in general the evangelical relation to culture has been strategically rather than theologically motivated. Indeed, the activism and populism have largely precluded discerning involvement in culture, and, sadly, the wisdom of culture has not been allowed to move the church toward greater maturity.

Further reading

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Notes

1. While it is recognized that evangelicalism is now a worldwide phenomenon, this article focuses largely on developments in North America and, to a lesser extent, Britain.
2. Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), p. 24. This also contributed, he notes, to making evangelicalism into an "affectional and organizational movement."
3. Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1952 [1871]), vol. 1, p. 1.
4. The complexities of the period both theologically and socially are described in George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980, 2nd edn. 2006), pp. 72–93. The best argument that a socially progressive evangelism was seriously privatized by century's end in America is Kathryn T. Long, *The Revival of 1857–1958: Interpreting an American Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
5. I am dependent here on Roger Lundin, "Offspring of an Odd Union: Evangelical Attitudes Toward the Arts," in George Marsden (ed.), *Evangelicalism and Modern America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), pp. 135–47.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 141.
7. Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, p. 99. And for what follows see p. 100.
8. On this period see Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

9. David O. Moberg has taught us to think of the evangelical withdrawal from social action and engagement in the first half of the twentieth century as the "Great Reversal." See Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism Versus Social Action* (London: Scripture Union, 1972).
10. See Noll, *Scandal*, p. 17. He refers to Robert Wuthnow's discussion of this situation.
11. See Charles Marsh, *God's Long Summer: Stories of Faith and Civil Rights* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).
12. Francis Schaeffer, *The God who is There* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1968), p. 129.
13. See J. D. Douglas (ed.), *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: International Congress on Evangelism: Official Reference Volume* (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide Publications, 1975). Schaeffer led an important track at this conference.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 7.
15. See *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture, The Papers of the Lausanne Consultation on Gospel and Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980).
16. See John Stott's *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1985); *Human Rights and Human Wrongs* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999).
17. John Howard Yoder, *Politics of Jesus* (1972); Richard J. Mouw, *Political Evangelism* (1973); *When the Kings Come Marching in* (1984); and Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Until Peace and Justice Embrace* (1984), all published by Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.
18. Though this is changing; see Jeremy Begbie, *Voicing Creation's Praise* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991); W. Dyrness, *Visual Faith: Art, Theology and Worship in Dialogue* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2001); and Robert Johnston, *Reel Spirituality: Theology and Film in Dialogue* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2000).
19. Noll, *Scandal*, p. 173.
20. Bob Briner, *Roaring Lambs: A Gentle Plan to Radically Change Your World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), p. 23.
21. Pat Robertson, *The Turning Tide* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1993), p. 303.
22. C. S. Lewis, "Christianity and Culture," in Walter Hooper (ed.), *Christian Reflections* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967), p. 15. Hooper argues in the introduction that this is an early work of Lewis which does not reflect his mature thinking, but it certainly reflects (and probably influenced) the thinking of many evangelicals! See p. xii.
23. For an earlier assessment of Schaeffer's influence see Ronald Ruegsegger (ed.), *Reflections on Francis Schaeffer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986). Garry Wills underlines Schaeffer's role in the religious right in *Under God: Religion and American Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), pp. 318–28.

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